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Celebrity Buzz

La Toya claims MJ was killed
pg 14

Soldiers' bomb trauma

Improvised explosive devices causing brain injury in coalition troops

Coalition troops in Afghanistan are being attacked by roadside bombs at record levels, leaving Canadians soldiers with a legacy of traumatic brain injuries that health experts are grappling to understand.

And the mental toll of having to patrol bomb-seeded roads is expected to show itself in the years ahead in a spike in the number of soldiers with post-traumatic stress disorder, military officials say.

"The view is, clearly, when you're involved with an IED (improvised explosive device), that you may have traumatic brain injuries," said Maj.-Gen. Walter Semianiw, chief of military personnel.

"If you've been exposed to a (traumatic brain injury) the prevalence of then having PTSD may be higher. The facts are very clear," he said in an interview.

"The biggest challenge is not here and today. It's in five years and 10 years. Are they going to get the support they need?" Semianiw said.

"The biggest challenge is not here and today. It's in five years and 10 years. Are they going to get the support they need?"
Maj.-Gen. Walter Semianiw

As NATO forces launch offensives in southern Afghanistan, insurgents are fighting back with homemade bombs at levels never before seen in the eight-year-old conflict.

By the end of June, there had been 2,508 "incidents" involving IEDs this year, a 60 per cent increase over the same period last year, according to statistics from the Pentagon.

While Canadian commanders say the bombs are the weapons of cowards, they have proven effective nonetheless, sowing fear and chaos among civilians and soldiers alike.

Blast-induced brain injuries range from mild concussion to severe skull fractures and penetrating head wounds that can cause memory loss, anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Festival sings sweet success

TRACEY TONG
tracey.tong@metronews.ca

A new venue, more free shows, more vendors and a star-studded lineup have added up to a successful first weekend at Cisco Ottawa Bluesfest.

In spite of Saturday's downpour, festivalgoers continued to pack LeBreton Flats and for the first time, the ByWard Market for concerts over the weekend.

"The show goes on rain or shine," said Bluesfest spokesman AJ Sauve.

The Bluesfest in the Market series, which features dozens of free shows, has been "a big success," said Sauve.

"The new venue has been great," he said.

"All the shows have been well-attended. We've done free shows in the past and we've worked with the (National Capital Commission with Noon on the Bridge) but nothing to this extent. This is a major investment in creating a good tourist destination."

"This is a major investment in creating a good tourist destination."
AJ Sauve, Bluesfest

The series wraps up tonight with Serena Ryder.

As for the crowds at LeBreton Flats, attendance numbers aren't available yet, but Sauve said that the number of people is "meeting expectations."

As for stages, the Barney Danson Theatre has been very popular this year, as well as the LeBreton Gallery, which opened as a venue for the first time, said director of operations Mike Rouleau.

ANDREW WILKINSON/PHOTO OTTAWA

Ani DiFranco brought her folk punk mix to the Hard Rock stage at Cisco Ottawa Bluesfest last night.
More on Bluesfest, pg 2.

Arrest made in gas station stabbing

CRIME A 16-year-old male is in stable, but serious condition in hospital after receiving multiple stab wounds to his back and leg late Saturday night during an incident at a gas station in east Vanier.

Police and paramedics were called to the Pioneer Gas Station at 590 Montreal Rd. around 11:30 p.m. Saturday, where they found the victim.

The patient was treated and transported to the pediatric trauma centre.

The Ottawa Police said late last night they have charged an 18-year-old Ottawa man in relation to the stabbing.

METRO OTTAWA

Going Green pg 9

Greening your pots and pans

SunnySide

Follow Metro's SunnySide initiative as we help you find the good news around Ottawa and Canada. This is also a Call to Action for you to send us your suggestions at ottawaletters @metronews.ca, metronews.ca or on Twitter @metroottawa.

On metronews.ca

- **Calling on all Ottawans — share your SunnySide thoughts on what makes Ottawa tick, people, places, events and architecture, on Twitter using #sunnyside**

Today

- **Take Anne Hines' writing quiz and see if you have what it takes, pg 7**

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Woman hospitalized after assault at shelter
A 45-year-old female is in hospital with serious injuries after an incident at a Lowertown shelter Saturday. Ottawa police are now investigating an aggravated assault and have arrested a female at the scene. METRO OTTAWA

Local

Speedsters pay up

Police here laid nearly 2,600 charges last month for speeding and impaired driving. Of the charges, 2,483 were in relation to speeding, with 26 construction-zone related and 23 of those resulting in the doubling of the fine amount, since construction workers were present in those instances. METRO OTTAWA

Local talent 'source of pride'

It's 'win-win' for show, area artists, says Bluesfest spokesman

TRACEY TONG
tracey.tong@metronews.ca

If you're tapped into the local music scene at all, you've probably seen Marc Charron perform at some point.

After all, the 35-year-old musician averages between 180 and 200 shows per year, many of them in Ottawa, which he calls home whenever he's not on the road.

But when the guitarist, singer and songwriter hits the Blacksheep stage at Cisco Ottawa Bluesfest as a part of rock band The Cheap Seats tomorrow night, you might be surprised.

He usually performs cover songs at his gigs at bars and pubs, but come tomorrow, festivalgoers will be treated to some of the versatile artist's original music.

Charron is among 50 to 60 local acts featured at Bluesfest this year. Local talent makes up about one-fifth of the roster, which is rare in music festivals, especially one of Bluesfest's calibre, said festival spokesman AJ Sauve.

"And there's not one blip in the degree of excellence," Sauve said. "It's always been a source of pride for Ottawa Bluesfest, the vast talent available in Ottawa."

Charron, who grew up in Kanata, got his start in music as a young teen.

"My dad was a guitar player and he always wanted to teach me, but I didn't want to learn," said Charron.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

Marc Charron performs at Cisco Ottawa Bluesfest tomorrow night with The Cheap Seats.

"He died when I was 13 years old. The day after he died, I started playing."

He hit the road at 18, busking his way across the country. Today, he plays hundreds of shows a year and opens for bands like The Dears, Pilot, The Stills and Xavier Rudd.

This year marks Charron's fourth time at Bluesfest. Besides being "thrilled to be playing with very accomplished musicians," Charron said he loves Bluesfest.

"I book my tours around the festival," he said. "We get treated like rock stars at Bluesfest. Until you play shows like this, you don't realize how good it is. And you get to meet such incredible people.

"This festival is definitely a hub for Ottawa musicians," he said.

It's win-win for the festival and the artists, Sauve said. In addition to being "a wonderful networking opportunity for musicians," having Bluesfest on their resumés "gives them a lot of cachet," he said.

Students ready case to nix transit age cap

TIM WIECLAWSKI
tim.wieclawski@metronews.ca

2009 budget

- The age cap was initially proposed back in October 2008 and passed in an omnibus motion as part of the 2009 budget.

It's not likely to change before the school year begins, but university students in Ottawa will start making their case against the 27-year-old age limit this Thursday at the pedestrian and transit advisory committee meeting.

"They may say that the age limit should be eliminated or that they are happy with it," said committee vice-chairman Shawn Menard. "It is becoming an issue, and legitimately so. There are students older than 27, who have more debt than other students, who aren't getting a discount on bus passes anymore."

If the advisory committee decides to pass a motion pertaining to the age limit, it would then go to the transit committee, but Menard said this issue would most likely be brought up during the 2010 budget discussions in December.

Transit committee chairman Alex Cullen encouraged students to make their case to the transit committee and target the 2010 budget for a possible change.

To revoke the age limit sooner than the 2010 budget would require three quarters of council to vote for reconsideration, which Cullen called a "significant hill to climb."

There is little pressure to repeal the limit right now, since most of the affected students have not even attempted to purchase passes yet.

"We're already hearing a lot of feedback … through email or Facebook," said Carleton University Students Association president Erik Halliwell.

A Facebook group called Against the Age Cut-off for Student Bus Passes was set up last Thursday and had 950 members as of last night.

UOttawa student federation president Seamus Wolfe predicted there will be a greater outrage about the age limit in September.

"They're going to be very angry," said Wolfe. "They need to know that their student federation is working on it so they can join our movement and be able to put pressure on the city."

St-Albert to celebrate with 3 tons of free curds

Curd is the word at this festival, but there's so much more to Festival de la Curd than just cheese.

Organizers unveiled the program for the 16th annual St-Albert Curd Festival in Orleans recently.

The festival, which runs from Aug. 12 to 16, features five days of shows under a big top, a giant maze, a farmers' market, a professional rodeo and over three tons of free cheese curds.

More than 20,000 people are expected at the festival this year, said spokesman Jean Bruyère. "Curd is a very unique thing to eastern Ontario. St-Albert is known for fresh cheese curd, and this is a good way to celebrate that," he said.

This year's performers include Just for Laughs' Peter Macleod, Steve Diamond, Sylvain Larocque and Julie Caron, Star Académie, Pat Groulx et les Bas Blancs and The League of Good Times.

Aug. 12 to 16

- Tickets are available on site or in advance at Cheddar et cetera in Orléans, Caisse populaire Nouvel-Horizon in Embrun, Caisse populaire Trillium in Limoges and various locations in St-Albert.

A professional rodeo, held on Aug. 15 and 16, will feature 200 cowboys and cowgirls who will compete for more than $30,000 in prizes.

The weekend also features a farmers' market, with free cooking demonstrations and samplings. New this year is a giant hay maze, created from more than 20,000 bales and 310 tons of hay. Inside, visitors will discover secret chambers, a petting zoo and solve puzzles.

TRACEY TONG/METRO OTTAWA

International fest Sparks Street

TIM WIECLAWSKI/METRO OTTAWA

Chinese dancer Huili Wang performs with the Oriental Dance Troupe of Ottawa at the Sparks Street Mall's four-day International Festival, which wrapped up yesterday.

metronews.ca
What's online today.

Video A Canadian general says Afghan insurgents are in "disarray" after arrival of extra U.S. troops at **metronews.ca/world**

Video Analysts expect the release of grim economic data to take a toll on stock markets at **metronews.ca/canada**

Lotteries

Friday, Jul. 10
Super 7: 17, 25, 30, 31, 33, 44 & 46 Bonus 47
Saturday, Jul. 11
Lotto 6/49: 09, 11, 18, 23, 29 & 40 Bonus 26
Sunday, Jul. 12
Ontario Pick 3: 9 3 1; **Ontario Pick 4:** 5 3 0 1
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Harper apologizes for remark mix-up
Prime Minister Stephen Harper apologized Friday after he publicly attacked his rival Michael Ignatieff for a comment the Liberal leader never made. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Canada

Queen to visit in 2010

The Queen and her husband, the Duke of Edinburgh, have accepted an invitation to visit Canada next year, Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced yesterday, CBC News Online reports. The tour will be the Queen's 24th official visit to Canada. She and Prince Philip last visited Canada in 2005. Further details on the dates and locations for the 2010 visit will be provided at a later date, the Prime Minister's Office said in a statement. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Doc warns moms-to-be of swine flu

HEALTH Pregnant women who catch the influenza A (H1N1) virus, also known as swine flu, are at greater risk than the general public of developing complications, which could lead to miscarriages, the Public Health Agency of Canada says.

"While pregnant women are not more likely to get H1N1, they are at greater risk for complications from the flu," chief public health officer Dr. David Butler-Jones said during a conference call yesterday.

Butler-Jones said problems could include early delivery and miscarriage.

Mothers-to-be should do the same things everyone else does to avoid getting sick, but they might want to pay a little extra attention.

"It's recommended that pregnant women be even more vigilant with hand washing and using hand sanitizer," Butler-Jones said. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

News in brief

CHARGED The Brazilian wife of former Canadian world boxing champion Arturo Gatti has been charged with his murder, police said yesterday. Italian-born Gatti, who was 37, was found dead on Saturday in the holiday flat the couple had rented in the northern Brazilian seaside resort of Porto de Galinhas. Amada Rodrigues, 23, was being held in custody in Recife, police said. REUTERS

Decision grounds ski jumpers

Lawyer says he needs time to consider appeal as judge finds for VANOC

VANCOUVER 2010 Games

KRISTEN THOMPSON
Metro Canada

A lawyer representing 15 female ski jumpers said he needs time to consider whether to appeal a recent B.C. Supreme Court decision not to order VANOC to let women jump in the 2010 Games.

"We're disappointed … but respect the judge's ruling," Ross Clark said.

On Friday, Justice Lauri Ann Fenlon ruled VANOC isn't violating Canada's Charter of Rights by not staging women's ski jumping.

Fifteen women had gone to court seeking to take part in the Olympics or cancel men's ski jumping as well.

While Fenlon agreed that excluding women is discriminatory, she said it's the IOC's decision — not VANOC's.

The Charter of Rights does not have jurisdiction over the IOC.

Women barred

- Ski jumping is the only sport in the Olympic Winter Games that doesn't have a women's component.

Katie Willis, a Calgary-based ski jumper and one of the plaintiffs in the case, said she was disappointed by the news.

"It's awful that we lost, but I'm glad we tried," Willis said.

Jessica Jerome, an American jumper said the news has left her "extremely disheartened."

"This decision will affect a lot of talented skiers," she said.

The IOC responded by saying that decisions regarding Olympic programs are "very carefully considered" years in advance.

"When the 2010 program was determined in 2006 … women's ski jumping had not developed to the point where it was ready for inclusion in the 2010 Olympic Winter Games," the statement said.

Harper scraps deficit promise

POLITICS Prime Minister Stephen Harper has scrapped his government's controversial promise to stop running annual budget deficits in five years.

For the first time, Harper said yesterday that keeping the government's pledge to balance Ottawa's books by 2013-14 will depend on how quickly Canada's economy recovers.

"We will allow the deficit to persist if necessary," Harper said.

"We will not, in order to meet some timetable, start raising taxes and cutting programs."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Calgary **Stampede wraps up**

ROBIN ROSINSKI/FOR METRO CANADA

Keiran Hughes holds his daughter Mckailyn, 4, on his shoulders yesterday to get a better view over the crowd of people on the last day of Calgary Stampede.

Federal critics demand names of do-not-call violators

DECISION Opposition critics are demanding the CRTC identify telemarketers thumbing their noses at do-not-call list rules instead of protecting them from public scorn.

The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission an arm's length agency refuses to name two telemarketers recently issued violation notices or even make public the amount of fines they face.

"We expected real vigilance on behalf of Canadian consumers, not shielding them (the telemarketers) under anonymity," NDP critic MP Pat Martin said. "Half the deterrence of a penalty is the bad publicity you get as being outed as a scofflaw. This do-not-call list is useless if it does not expose the wrongdoers to public outcry."

Martin said few things unite Canadians more than their loathing of telemarketers, especially those who refuse to respect the no-call list launched in September 2008.

According to the CRTC, the federal regulator, nearly seven million telephone numbers have been registered on the national no-call list. "They (telemarketers) really are the bottom of the food chain in terms of commercial marketing," Martin said.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Peru hit by earthquake
A 6.0 magnitude quake hit southern Peru early yesterday but there were no reports of damages or injuries. REUTERS

World

Shuttle launch postponed again

Heavy clouds near the Kennedy Space Center forced NASA to call off yesterday's launch of the space shuttle Endeavour on a mission to deliver a Japanese-built porch to the International Space Station. The launch was rescheduled for today. It was the fourth delay of Endeavour's flight. Two launch attempts last month were scuttled by hydrogen fuel leaks and a third try Saturday ended when NASA ordered checks of the shuttle's electrical systems following lightning strikes. REUTERS

Four killed in church attacks

IRAQ Bombs exploded outside five Christian churches in Baghdad yesterday, in apparently co-ordinated attacks that killed four people and wounded more than 30, Iraqi police said. In the most serious attack, a car bomb exploded near a church in eastern Baghdad, killing four people and wounding 21. A police source said at least eight Christians were among the wounded. The bloodshed that followed the U.S.-led invasion in 2003 has largely faded, but violence continues, especially in ethnically and religiously mixed areas. REUTERS

Honduras could offer amnesty

COUP Honduran interim leader Roberto Micheletti said yesterday ousted president Manuel Zelaya would not be allowed to return to power under any conditions but could be granted an amnesty if he comes home quietly to face justice. "If he comes peacefully first to appear before the authorities ... I don't have any problem (with amnesty)," Micheletti told Reuters in an interview at the presidential palace in Tegucigalpa. But the interim president repeated that Zelaya would not be reinstated as president "under any conditions." REUTERS

SHAMIL ZHUMATOV/REUTERS

An Afghan National Army soldier looks from behind his machine gun during a joint patrol with U.S. and French troops in the village of Hajian yesterday.

Afghan escalation

Taliban responding to U.S. surge with violence

A roadside bomb killed two U.S. Marines in southern Afghanistan, the U.S. military said yesterday, the latest deaths in an escalation of violence that has put pressure on coalition leaders over their war strategy.

Thousands of U.S. Marines and hundreds of British soldiers have been fighting major new offensives in the past 10 days in Helmand province, a Taliban stronghold and Afghanistan's biggest producer of the opium that funds the insurgency.

The assault by U.S. Marines, Operation Strike of the Sword, is the first major operation under U.S. President Barack Obama's new regional strategy to defeat the Taliban and stabilize Afghanistan, which holds a presidential election on Aug. 20.

Violence has flared again throughout Afghanistan since the operation began on July 2, with attacks in traditional Taliban strongholds in the south and east as well as in relatively more peaceful areas in the north and west.

The Taliban backlash has put pressure on leaders in Washington and London, who say U.S. and other NATO-led troops have pushed back Taliban insurgents but that a lot of tough fighting remains to be done during the summer.

A third soldier serving with NATO-led forces in the south died on Friday from wounds received in June, the alliance said in a statement issued yesterday. No other details were available.

Washington is pouring in extra troops under Obama's new strategy, with numbers set to more than double to 68,000 by the end of the year.

British troops mounting their biggest operation of the campaign in Afghanistan have also suffered under the Taliban backlash, with 15 confirmed killed in a 10-day period, including five in two roadside bomb blasts on Friday. Taliban casualty figures were not immediately available. REUTERS

Sotomayor hearing opens Supreme Court debate

U.S. Sonia Sotomayor looks almost certain to emerge from Senate hearings this week poised to become the first Hispanic member of the U.S. Supreme Court.

But political debate over President Barack Obama's plans for the top U.S. court has only begun. Republicans are ready to resist what they fear could be a sharp leftward turn for the court under Obama's Democratic administration, reversing a steady tack to the right under former Republican President George W. Bush.

Obama, a former constitutional law professor, chose the 55-year-old Sotomayor to replace the now-retired Justice David Souter, who had been one of four liberals on the deeply divided nine-member court. Members are appointed for life.

Sotomayor

The president wished his nominee good luck in a phone call from the Oval Office yesterday, expressing "his confidence that Judge Sotomayor would be confirmed to serve as a justice on the Supreme Court for many years to come," the White House said. REUTERS

Israel **Settlement issue**

ARIEL JEROZOLIMSKI/REUTERS

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu lays a wreath during a memorial ceremony for Theodore Herzl, the founder of modern Zionism, in Jerusalem yesterday. A Palestinian official said yesterday Palestinians reject any limited Jewish settlement construction in the occupied West Bank.

Cheney hid program: Senator

CIA The CIA withheld information from U.S. Congress about a secret counterterrorism program on orders from former vice-president Dick Cheney, a U.S. senator said yesterday amid calls for an investigation.

Democratic Senator Dianne Feinstein told Fox News Sunday that CIA Director Leon Panetta disclosed Cheney's involvement when he briefed members of Congress two weeks ago.

She said Panetta told them he had cancelled the program. News of Cheney's involvement prompted an outpouring of criticism by Democrats and support by rival Republicans. Asked if the matter should be investigated, Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin said, "Absolutely." REUTERS

News in brief

CHINA An uneasy calm returned yesterday to China's riot-hit Urumqi where 184 people died in ethnic violence a week ago, though the official tally of dead could rise, a regional official indicated. According to the official count, 137 of those killed were Han Chinese and 46 were Uighurs who share cultural bonds with Central Asian peoples. The death toll could rise further. Xinjiang's governor yesterday raised the number of injured to 1,680, of which 74 were critically injured, from the previous figure of about 1,000.

TALKS A meeting of the prime ministers of India and Pakistan on the fringes of the Non-Aligned Movement Summit this week could set the stage for a dialogue between the rivals that was stalled after last November's attack in Mumbai. Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and his Pakistani counterpart Yusuf Raza Gilani will meet in Sharm-el-Sheikh in Egypt. Pakistan has been pushing for the resumption of the five-year-long peace talks broken off by India after the Mumbai attacks, which India blames on Pakistan-based militants. Peace between the two nuclear-armed rivals had helped boost bilateral trade to over $1 billion US.

RELEASE Al Qaida's North African wing has freed a Swiss hostage, the last remaining Westerner the group had been holding in the Sahara, the government of Mali said yesterday. Werner Greiner was captured in late January with three other Westerners while attending a music festival near the Niger-Mali border. Two women in the group were freed before Edwin Dyer, a British man, was executed in May. REUTERS

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- Bhutan.....15.9 ¢
- Nepal from.....7.9 ¢
- Pakistan.....5.9 ¢
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Setback for Japanese PM

Unpopular Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso may face a struggle to keep his job after his ruling bloc was soundly defeated in a weekend Tokyo election seen as a bellwether for a national poll to be held within three months. REUTERS

Low turnout for vote in Congo Republic

Opposition called for boycott over irregularities

Congo Republic voted on yesterday in an election widely expected to give President Denis Sassou-Nguesso another seven years in power, but turnout appeared low after an opposition boycott.

There were no reports of widespread violence, but scuffles were reported between former militia fighters and soldiers in the volatile Pool region, the scene of fighting during a 1997-2002 conflict in the central African state.

Investors seeking to diversify the economy in Africa's fifth biggest oil producer are watching to see whether the vote sparks a repeat of the conflict and rows that have marred previous elections and disrupted political and economic stability.

"There have not been big crowds," Roger Bouaka, executive director of Congolese Human Rights Observatory.

"The vote was calm and without any major incident except in the Pool region, where there was disruption in some places."

Opposition parties, citing irregularities in voter lists and cards, had called for the vote to be postponed to allow for the creation of a new election commission and the clean up of voter lists, which were a source of complaints during 2002 polls. REUTERS

The president

- Denis Sassou-Nguesso has been in and out of power since a 1979 coup, losing multiparty elections in 1992 before sweeping back into power in a war that destroyed much of the capital in 1997.

Pakistan **Protests over courtroom slaying**

ATHAR HUSSAIN/REUTERS

A young girl holds a sign to protest the death of an Egyptian Muslim woman during a demonstration in Karachi, Pakistan yesterday. Marwa El-Sherbiny, mother to a three-year-old and three months pregnant, was stabbed 18 times by the man she was testifying against during an appeal hearing, German prosecutors said. Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad blamed Germany for the murder and said it should face UN condemnation, state media reported yesterday.

U.K.'s faith in war shaken by deaths

AFGHANISTAN British Prime Minister Gordon Brown tried to shore up public faith in the Afghan war effort yesterday after the death of eight British soldiers in 24 hours sowed doubts about the mission.

The surge in deaths has led to unprecedented soul-searching in Britain over the point of its intervention in Afghanistan and led to cracks in a political consensus in support of the war.

The number of British troops killed in Afghanistan — 184 — now surpasses the British toll from the Iraq conflict.

Britain has 9,000 soldiers in Afghanistan, the second largest foreign contingent after the United States. REUTERS

News in brief

FRANCE Workers at collapsed French car parts maker New Fabris threatened yesterday to blow up their factory if they did not receive payouts by July 31 from auto groups Renault and Peugeot to compensate for their lost jobs. New Fabris was declared in liquidation in April, so the workers stand to get no redundancy money, although they are entitled to draw state unemployment benefit. They want Renault SA and PSA Peugeot Citroen to pay $49,000 for each of the 336 staff at the factory, or some 10 million euros in total, in return for its remaining stocks of equipment and machinery. A delegation of the workers has a meeting on Thursday with Renault, which had no immediate comment. REUTERS

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Comment

Are you a wordsmith?

HineSight

Anne Hines

metronews.ca/hinesight

With many people rethinking their employment options, it's possible some might be considering whether taking up writing may be the way to go.

Working as a freelance writer has many benefits. You always get what you want in the Secret Santa draw and you'll never be troubled by pesky issues such as how to invest your retirement income.

For those wondering if being a writer is right for you, I offer: Are You A Writer?

1. You've just submitted your completed manuscript. Your publisher calls.

Publisher: We love it, it's fabulous, it'll sell millions. (Truthfully, I have never heard a publisher say that, but I dare to dream. What they really say is ... It seems OK. You just need to make it longer.)

You: Longer?

P: Much longer.

You: Would you like me to get taller as well?

P: Can you do that?

You: It's a book. You write until the story is finished and then … it's finished.

P: I'm a publisher. I know that. We just need you to finish about 6,000 words later.

Do you:

a) Throw a hissy fit, complain the world does not appreciate your artistic vision and you bet no one treats John Grisham like this.

b) Report your publisher to the human rights commission, which will use it as the "Entertaining Call of the Week" in its newsletter.

c) Sit down, write 6,000 more words and feel lucky.

SunnySide

2. You're invited to read at an event alongside a famous, bestselling author. At the book-signing tables, her lineup snakes out the auditorium, through the parking lot, into a neighbouring township.

You, on the other hand, have time to learn a foreign language.

Do you:

a) Sit and contemplate with delight the success of your fellow author.

b) Tell your mother she'd better get over to your table right now or you're sending her your therapy bills.

c) Join the crowd and hock the signed copy on eBay.

3. You've written a book that will save humankind. Publishers keep turning it down on the basis of it being 2,356 pages long and almost entirely incomprehensible.

Would you:

a) Self publish. The world needs to know.

b) Call the human rights commission and make its newsletter again.

c) Trim it to 360 words, add a religious scandal and a sex scene and prepare to field publishing offers.

If you answered mostly c's, you'll make millions. Mostly a's and b's, congratulations, you're a writer.

Anne Hines is an author and humour writer. She has written three novels and one collection of nonfiction humour.

MICHAEL DE ADDER

Views

Take time to be courteous to other riders

InTransit

Kim Mannix Vermette

metronews.ca/intransit

Last week I talked about driver courtesy, but most days as a bus rider it's the common courtesy — or lack thereof — of other passengers that can make taking the bus a treat or a trial.

I am now in my last few weeks of pregnancy with my first baby, and since I have been noticeably showing, taking the bus has become a bit of an adventure.

Luckily for me, my regular routes are rarely so packed that I can't find a seat, but even when a spot up front — in the seats reserved for pregnant women, elderly or disabled persons or people with young children — is available or offered to me I still feel uncomfortable taking it.

And I am a bit of a contradiction, I realize, because even though I still don't consider myself in need of these seats, and would usually rather sit closer to the back door, I get irked when people look directly at my pregnant belly, yet decline to offer me a seat.

I know I can't have it both ways, but I figure just because I don't want to sit up front doesn't mean you shouldn't offer.

The reason I would rather not take up these seats is that inevitably someone who needs the space more than I do will board and I will need to move back anyway.

Leaving these seats for the people who need them most is a logical bus rule and one that most people really shouldn't have any trouble obeying.

Instead, these people are busy reading their books, playing with their phones, or just feeling entitled to park their butts wherever they want without concern for anyone else.

I find these inconsiderate seat-takers only slightly less annoying than the big bag and backpack wearers who deem it necessary to stand in the aisle and whack riders' faces every time they shift position or turn to talk to a friend. It's only common sense that on a crowded bus your giant bag is better suited to be held in front of you, yet I rarely see anyone take them off.

I am sure I've committed my own discourtesies in my many years as a bus rider, as I do believe most people act this way not to be malicious but because they are simply unaware. And I've probably become more aware of rider courtesy since me and my growing belly now take up extra space on the bus.

My own pledge to courtesy is to try to keep my strollers small and out of the way, or carry my baby in a sling, and to not let my diaper bag smack you in the face as I pass down the aisle.

Lifelong transit rider Kim Mannix Vermette has lived in Ottawa for almost five years. She actually enjoys taking the bus.

Letters

OC Transpo age limit is both greedy and shameful

Re: Too Old For Pass? July 10

By placing an age cap of 27, OC Transpo is illegitimately pigeonholing a select group of students from acquiring any sort of discount pricing on student passes.

I could easily argue that students older than 25 have less capacity to handle a fare increase.

Can you honestly say that an 18-year-old student graduating from high school, and quite possibly still living at home with his or her parents with zero debt accumulated, has less capacity to afford a monthly pass than an adult who has lost their job and wants to go back to school in order to get a better job.

I spend just as much time, if not more, as a full-time student working on my studies towards my diploma, which affords me very limited time to actually work at my part-time job.

The $220,000 OC Transpo will "save" with this age cap is merely a dollar amount coming out of the pockets of Ottawa residents who are trying their hardest to financially keep their heads above water, while supporting their families with the hopes of a brighter future ahead.

For you and your organization to bleaken their bright futures by forcing money out of their pockets is both greedy and shameful.

PAM BUCH, OTTAWA

Common sense seems to be lacking these days

Re: Bluesfest

I just read the article about the Bluesfest and I agree that it is a wonderful event. But I also believe there is always a bad.

I witnessed a man that walked out of the Bluesfest venue to return later but was denied access because he did not have his ticket scanned on his way out. The wristband last year was much better.

I also witnessed a man in line who was much older than me (I'm 43) being refused a beer ID wristband because he did not bring his driver's licence or other form of ID with him. Where has common sense gone?

ARTHUR BOUDREAU, OTTAWA

Tell us your views by email to ottawaletters@metronews.ca or comment on metronews.ca or on Twitter @metroottawa

Letters must include sender's full name, address and phone number – street name and phone numbers will NOT be published. We reserve the right to edit letters.

Union workers in Ontario nickel mine set to strike

Union workers at Vale Inco's Sudbury, Ont., nickel mine rejected the company's final contract offer and were set to strike at midnight this morning, the United Steelworkers union said Saturday. Negotiations between Vale Inco — the nickel mining and processing division of Brazil's Companhia Vale do Rio Doce — and its union broke down last week. REUTERS

Business

GM, eBay eyeing program

General Motors and its dealers are aiming for a test program with eBay Inc. in California that would allow customers to bid on new vehicles or buy them at a predetermined price online, the automaker said on Friday. EBay said it has been in discussions with GM to identify ways to help dealers market vehicles but no plans had been finalized at this time. REUTERS

EDITOR: FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

China pursues resource buys

China's purchase of a $1.74-billion stake in Teck Resources may be just the opening move from the world's top resource consumer to use its unique wealth to become a key source of mining capital for Canadian firms.

Teck said last week it sold a 17.2 per cent equity stake to state-owned China Investment Corp. in a deal that lets the Canadian miner pay down its debt while expanding China's portfolio of commodity investments.

Commodities

- Teck is a major producer of copper, metallurgical coal, zinc and gold, all commodities sought by China.

The deal underscores how deep China's pockets are at a time when many sources of credit and financing have dried up in the global recession, even for the biggest miners.

"Most people thought China would take advantage of this dip in commodity prices and, because they're the only ones with money, take advantage of this financial situation we are in. They have come through big time, be it oil and gas, or any commodity you can think of," said David Davidson, an analyst with Paradigm Capital in Toronto.

"I think what they are looking for is distressed opportunities ... Companies who have a strong resource base that are suffering because of the lack of liquidity in the market," added Jack Azimi, managing director of Foundation Markets, a small investment firm in Toronto. REUTERS

Business In brief

L'AQUILA World leaders signalled the demise of the Group of Eight on Friday, saying only a forum that included the major developing economies could decide on global issues. Problems such as climate change and the economic crisis have revealed the limits of the G8, comprising the United States, Japan, Germany, Italy, France, Britain, Russia and Canada. During its annual summit in Italy this week it met the leaders of China, India, Brazil, Mexico, South Africa and Egypt, spontaneously forming the so-called G14.

ENERGY The growth of an often overlooked line item on the balance sheet of U.S. weekly oil inventories indicates that the market is fundamentally out of balance. The rise of the amount of "unfinished oils" in the U.S. Energy Information Administration's snapshot of oil supply and demand means refiners are stockpiling the semi-finished oils in an effort to keep profit margins aloft.

AUTO Toyota Motor Corp. said Friday it would consider liquidating its stake in a jointly owned California auto plant with GM after the U.S. automaker pulled out of the venture in June. The auto firms had been 50-50 partners in the plant since 1984. REUTERS

Unemployment hit 11-year high in June, says StatsCan

STUDY Hiring across many sectors such as financial services, insurance, real estate, information, culture and recreation in June helped offset job losses in manufacturing, the most recent jobs report from Statistics Canada shows.

As a result, Canada's unemployment rate edged up 0.2 per cent to 8.6 per cent last month, to its highest level in 11 years.

"The first quarter was an absolute horror show," said Doug Porter, BMO Capital Markets deputy chief economist. "I wouldn't want to see those job losses repeated ever again."

Economists had been bracing for much worse. A surprisingly low 7,400 jobs were lost in June, compared with 42,000 in May In total, 454,000 jobs have been lost since October.

"The first quarter was an absolute horror show."
Doug Porter, BMO

It may also be a sign that the worst of the recession has passed, economists say. But the good news ends there: A loss of full-time jobs coupled with a rise in part-time jobs and self-employment is igniting concerns that people are being forced to strike out on their own.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Digital generation not lazy, just different, author argues

Grown Up Digital
Author: Don Tapscott
Publisher: McGraw-Hill
Price: $30.95 (Hardcover)

REVIEW The modern institutions of days gone by are fast becoming lacklustre, archaic systems of bureaucracy that are ultimately failing the largest generation, the Net generation.

Prolific author Don Tapscott's newest book, Grown Up Digital, a follow-up to his first book on the topic, Growing Up Digital, sizes up the first generation to grow up completely in the digital age. They grab new gadgets and immediately begin using it, whereas their parents will spend hours combing a manual and still be baffled.

To cynics, this generation appears unfocused, antisocial, and A.D.D. Tapscott wholly disagrees — a very refreshing perspective that now gives me a bit more peace of mind, knowing how much time I already spend Facebooking and Twittering.

CRAIG LUND/
FOR METRO CANADA

Ragweed allergy season is coming.

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YSB BSJ

Chuck those toxic baby wipes
If you are a parent of a young child, chuck your baby wipes. They've been bleached in chlorine — a real no-no, since chlorine produces very toxic dioxins, according to Gillian Deacon's Green For Life. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Going Green

Sprucing up your house?

Look for paints and floor finishes that are low in volatile organic compounds. They work just about as well as the more toxic varieties, according to Green Remodeling. Water-based polyurethane for floors isn't as tough as the oil-based version. But, on the other hand, it won't yellow over time. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

EDITOR: FERMIN DESOUZA, FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

The non-stick cookware debate

EarthTones

Sophia Dore & Andrew Laursen

metronews.ca/earthtones

This week we shift gears and go from considering the large global environment in which we live to the small local environment in which we also live. This small environment can be as small as your own kitchen. Just as we need to worry about what heavy industry is putting into the air we breathe, so too do we need to worry about what we ourselves are putting into our air and our bodies.

Recently there has been much debate about the safety of using "non-stick" cookware. Now I have to admit, I love my non-stick pots. Whenever I try to cook in anything else I end up having to chip the food off the bottom of the pan with a chisel. This is less than appetizing. However am I trading safety for unpetrified food?

Non-stick coating is made from fluoropolymers. These compounds can break down into perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), a suspected human carcinogen. PFOA is found at low levels in the blood of most North Americans. Are we getting it from our cookware though? As I check this out on the web some sites tell me that my pots are definitely toxic. Then I notice that many of them want to sell me new pots. Other sites tell me that my non-stick pots are perfectly safe. Then I notice that some of them make the non-stick pots or the coating. Who to believe?

Most of the impartial information I find, including the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and a leading scientific journal indicate that very little if any PFOA in our blood comes from non-stick cookware. The coating decomposes into PFOA at temperatures about 350°C (660°F). Temperatures for normal usage — frying meat 240°C (470°F), baking 230°C (450°F) — are well below these levels. In fact anything you have in the pot — butter, oil etc will start to smoke at 204°C (400°F) and in my experience this will set off your smoke detector. Any coating that flakes off your pan and gets eaten will pass right through you and will not harm you at all.

If you do heat a non stick pot above 350°C (660°F) and you breathe in the fumes you can get what is called polymer fume fever which gives you flu-like symptoms. It is reversed on breathing fresh air in humans but can be fatal to birds. So don't keep your canary in the kitchen if you are prone to burning pots. The bottom line with pots is to weigh the health concerns about non-stick coatings against the health concerns of putting more fat in the pan so your food doesn't stick to a regular pan. I think for most people the fat is a greater health risk.

OK so that's where PFOA isn't. Here's where it is.

Microwave popcorn bags. Most of these bags have non-stick coatings and when you heat your popcorn they decompose, leach into the oil and stick to your popcorn. If you eat just 10 bags of microwave popcorn a year, 20 per cent of the PFOA in your blood could be from popcorn.

Finally we need to take things back to the larger environment and consider where the non-popcorn PFOA in our blood comes from. A possible source is pollution from the industries that put the coating on the pan and in the popcorn bags. So use your non-stick pots but don't buy more than you need because the more we consume the more they create.

Sophia Dore is an environmental scientist with Conestoga-Rovers & Associates. Andrew Laursen is an assistant professor at Ryerson University; earthtones.metro@gmail.com.

Biogas highly promising biofuel

ORGANIC Three Ontario entrepreneurs are turning organic waste from Ontario's farms and food processing plants into the province's newest biofuel industry.

Methane from manure and other organic matter traps 21 times more heat in the atmosphere than carbon dioxide, making it a major contributor to global warming. But it's also a highly potent fuel like natural gas. And, it can be converted into biogas — a form of energy produced through the anaerobic digestion of food processing, agricultural and livestock waste.

In fact, biogas offers a higher energy yield than ethanol from waste that most people consider to be unusable. For example, one tonne of banana peels can be converted into enough energy to power three trips on a 25 kilometres long streetcar line.

Working with Canada's farmers and agri-food industries, StormFisher Biogas is constructing biogas facilities in London, Ont., Guelph and Niagara this year. At full capacity, these plants will offset the CO2 equivalent of 26,000 cars per year and create full-time jobs in rural areas, as well as indirect jobs in transportation and waste handling services.

StormFisher was the idea of three entrepreneurs — Bas van Berkel, Chris Guillon and Ryan Little, who have quickly turned StormFisher into a North American pioneer in an industry that's already thriving in Europe.

With support from Ontario Centres of Excellence (OCE), the founders first explored the viability of an Ontario biogas venture. Once the potential was established, OCE connected StormFisher with researchers at the University of Western Ontario, enabling the startup to develop a business plan.

StormFisher formed a strategic partnership with a Boston-based private equity firm to develop a $350-million portfolio of biogas projects, launching StormFisher to the top of the heap in North America's biogas sector.

NEWS CANADA

New trend: Recycling for a cause

TREASURES We all know recycling is good for the environment, but have you ever thought about how recycling could help those who are less fortunate? With tougher economic times and job losses, a growing trend this year is finding a way to turn your trash into someone else's treasure.

Old electronics: That dated computer or cellphone might be old to you, but chances are it would be new to someone else. Most electronics we toss away still work, but are thrown away in favour of newer models. Consider donating them to organizations that help provide job training for the unemployed.

Not just your old clothes: Most of us have donated some old clothes to a local charity at some point but why stop there? Kitchen items that aren't being used can find a new home at the local soup kitchen; unused toiletries would be appreciated at a women's shelter; and gently used children's toys are a welcome addition to any church.

Don't put nickels in the blue bin: You wouldn't put a bin full of coins out for the garbage truck so why give away those cans? Aluminum cans can be traded in for money that you can use to support the charity of your choice. Kids love collecting cans around the neighbourhood and at school if it is for a cause they can get excited about.

Christian Children's Fund of Canada's, an international children's organization, website (ccfcanada.ca) offers a host of donation choices that kids here can send to poor children overseas — from a soccer ball to school supplies.

NEWS CANADA

5 tips to paint your community green

The hardest part of making a change is often just taking that first step. This year, it seems more Canadians than ever are taking their first step toward making a difference in their community, and many are focusing on the environment. If you're interested in making a difference, here are a few tips to get you started:

1 If you've got a green thumb, choose to make your gardens—whether they span over an acre or sit in pots on your balcony—wildlife friendly. Grow climbing plants like morning glory, trumpet honeysuckle, purple clematis or Virginia creeper to attract butterflies and hummingbirds, or shrubs such as juniper, cedar, American elderberry, common winterberry or northern bayberry to attract birds.

2 Speaking of wildlife, become involved in a local effort to improve the habitat of endangered or threatened species in your area. Find out which animals are at risk and see if there's any way you can help. Once you know, apply to the Canon Canada Nurture Nature Awards at canon.ca/donations_sponsorships for the opportunity to win $20,000 to fund your environmental initiative. Submissions will be accepted until Sept. 1.

3 If you prefer to buy your produce rather than grow it, try to buy locally. Not only does it reduce food kilometres, but it supports enterprising community members. And to increase the good it does for the community, leave the car parked at home for your trip to the local farmer's market — take transit, hop on a bike or go for a walk.

4 Reduce, reuse and recycle all at once by hosting a community yard sale. Purge your home of things that you no longer need — which might just be treasures for some bargain hunters — and take any leftovers to Goodwill.

5 Organize neighbourhood garbage pickup days to help make your community clean and beautiful. Get the kids excited about participating by offering a prize for the most trash picked up. End the day with a community picnic or a barbecue using food from the garden and from local farmers.

NEWS CANADA

Gallant captures second leg of Canadian Triple Crown

Gallant beat filly Milwaukee Appeal in a photo finish to capture the 74th running of the Prince of Wales Stakes thoroughbred race yesterday in Fort Erie, Ont. Queen's Plate champion Eye of The Leopard finished third. The Breeders' Stakes will be run Aug. 2 at Woodbine Racetrack in Toronto. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Sports

Webber wins first GP

Red Bull's Mark Webber, left, won his first Formula One race after overcoming a penalty to take the German Grand Prix yesterday. The Australian beat teammate Sebastian Vettel despite a drive-through penalty for bumping Brawn GP's Rubens Barrichello at the start. Felipe Massa gave Ferrari its first podium finish of the season by finishing third ahead of Nico Rosberg of Williams. METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: CHRIS.CLEMENTS@METRONEWS.CA

BOGDAN CRISTEL/REUTERS

The peloton rides during the ninth stage of the 96th Tour de France cycling race between Saint Gaudens and Tarbes yesterday.

Armstrong looking forward to the Alps

'We'll see who's truly the strongest,' U.S. cyclist says

Seven-times champion Lance Armstrong is looking forward to the Alpine stages after losing 21 seconds to Astana teammate Alberto Contador in the first mountain finish of the Tour de France.

"We'll have more moments there when we'll see who's truly the strongest," Armstrong told reporters yesterday.

The 37-year-old was surprised by Contador's brutal attack in the ascent to Arcalis on Friday which put the Spaniard two seconds ahead of him in the overall standing as the race leaves the Pyrenees.

"I wouldn't say that I could have easily followed because it was an impressive attack," said the American, on his comeback Tour after almost four years in retirement.

"I probably could have gone, but I didn't see it coming, and it wouldn't be correct for me to go across.

"So I waited for the other guys — I expected them to be able to pull it back, and they didn't, but that's life, that's cycling, and I had to do the right thing."

Italian Rinaldo Nocentini wears the yellow jersey after nine stages of the three-week race. Contador is six seconds behind him with Armstrong third.

The rivalry between Armstrong and 2007 Tour winner Contador is likely to culminate next Sunday with a summit finish in Verbier, Switzerland.

Contador, a natural climber, has shown with victories in the Giro, Tour and Vuelta, that he has almost no rivals in the mountains.

But Armstrong, Tour champion from 1999 to 2005, has a plan.

"I think that's where the race is going to be decided. The combination of those days from Colmar all the way to the top of Ventoux is a very difficult six days," the Texan said.

REUTERS

Despite results, Stephen Hart needed behind the scenes

It's Called Football

Ben Rycroft

metronews.ca/justsoccer

Stephen Hart should not be made the full-time head coach of Canada's Men's National team.

There, I said it. Breathe. It wasn't easy.

Since taking over the coaching duties (once again) he has led the national squad to an undefeated record. And he has done it with a young squad missing some of its star power. And he has done it in the so-called Group of Death. And he has done it for no money.

So, why the Sam Hill shouldn't he be made head coach? Well, to put it simply, Hart can do better.

Right now, he's doing the job of two men — interim national team head coach and technical director of the Canadian Soccer Association. Hell, as technical director, he's doing the job of 10 men.

So, if you're counting: That's the job of 11 men, by one man, making one salary. Quite the deal. Kind of makes you wonder where that savvy negotiating was when the last coach was inked.

In Hart, you have one of the clearest, most succinct soccer minds in the country. He is one of many who share an understanding of what needs to be done to develop world-class soccer players in this country — and one of the few who are actually in a position to do something about it.

I think back to January when Hart came on the It's Called Football show. In a wide-ranging interview, the man from Trinidad and Tobago discussed the impact youth academies are having across the country, how to link streams of amateur player development into our professional and semi-professional ranks and, more importantly, stressed the importance of raising the level of technical coaching standards in Canada.

It was a complex, enlightening interview and a breath of fresh air. Afterwards, Ben Knight, co-host of the show and a man with 20 years of soccer writing under his colourful vest, turned to me and said, "Wow, this guy gets it. We've really got something here."

Got something, indeed.

"The man can't keep on doing the demanding work of both jobs — one side or the other will eventually suffer."

The question now is what the CSA intends to do with Hart.

It's hard not to look back on the disastrous World Cup qualifying campaign and wonder what could have been if Hart had led the way. The players, by all accounts, love playing for him and, quite simply, he gets results.

And with Canada looking like it may make a run deep into the Gold Cup, the calls will certainly once again come to install Hart as the full-time head coach.

That would be a mistake.

The man can't keep on doing the demanding work of both jobs — one side or the other will eventually suffer.

Getting results with the national team is the sexier approach, but developing elite level players for generations to come would be the smart one.

Watch Ben Rycroft on the It's Called Football show every Monday at metronews.ca; ben.rycroft@metronews.ca.

Orioles deal Jays another close loss

BASEBALL Brian Roberts went 2-for-4 with a double and two runs batted in, as the Baltimore Orioles got past the Toronto Blue Jays 4-2 yesterday in the rubber match of a three-game set at Camden Yards.

Oscar Salazar finished with a pair of hits, including a solo homer for Baltimore.

The Blue Jays have dropped five of six and have won only three times in the last 15 games overall. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Simon Fraser first Canadian school to gain NCAA status

In a historic first, Simon Fraser University has been given membership into the National Collegiate Athletic Association's Division II.

The British Columbia university on Friday became the first non-American post-secondary institution to gain such acceptance.

American competition is nothing new for SFU — its teams not only compete in Canadian Interuniversity Sport but also the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics, which is comprised of U.S. schools.

SFU will go through a two-year transition, where all of its teams will maintain their present course in the NAIA and CIS.

The teams could then begin play in the Great Northwest Athletic Conference in 2011-12, where it would face schools such as Central Washington University and Seattle Pacific University.

KARL YU /FOR METRO CANADA

Indy Toronto Franchitti wins

SAUL PORTO/TOP NEWS

Scotland's Dario Franchitti, centre, celebrates after winning the Honda Indy Toronto yesterday. Franchitti recovered from a pit road mishap and then capitalized on a series of late-race crashes to win. The win moved Franchitti past Scott Dixon for first place in the overall season standings.

Sports in brief

WOMEN'S OPEN Eun Hee Ji of South Korea made a 20-foot birdie putt on the 72nd hole, finishing off an even-par 71 to win the U.S. Women's Open. Ji recovered from a double-bogey at the 10th hole and finished at even-par 284 yesterday, outlasting third-round leader Cristie Kerr.

ALL-STAR GAME Boston Red Sox second baseman Dustin Pedroia has withdrawn from tomorrow's all-star game to be with his wife who is in hospital, Major League Baseball announced yesterday. Aaron Hill of the Toronto Blue Jays will get the start at second base.

UFC Welterweight champion Georges St. Pierre showed off his superb wrestling skills and all-round smarts in winning a unanimous and dominant decision over Thiago Alves in the co-main event of UFC 100 on Saturday.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Metro Workology exclusive: Backstage Pass
In the coming weeks Metro's Workology section will be focusing on the part of the entertainment industry that you DON'T see. Backstage Pass will focus on the careers behind the camera and the curtain. So be sure to read Workology and Metronews.ca/work every day.

Workology

EDITOR: DOUGLAS.DUNLOP@METRONEWS.CA

Next radio generation

Backstage Pass

BRIAN COULTON
for Metro Canada

It prides itself on "breaking new sound", it's Canada's only station dedicated to independent Canadian music and it can be heard on two different formats — online and satellite. But Steve Pratt says CBC Radio 3 isn't really a radio station at all.

SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Steve Pratt is the director of digital programming for all of CBC Radio.

"I know that sounds odd," says Pratt, the station's Vancouver-based director and director of digital programming for all of CBC Radio. "It's more like we try to be experts and help people discover new Canadian music. It doesn't really matter whether it's radio, video, blogging or social networking."

Instead, Pratt calls Radio 3 an "ecosystem" because its makeup is like a living, breathing, user-generated community — considering its huge user-generated content.

"A lot of the tools on the website are designed to help people discover and get to know artists and then be able to share stuff they like with their own social networks," says Pratt. That's reflected in the station's frequent use of blogs (each show features a unique blog-a-day by its host, inviting listeners to join the conversation), Twitter and personalized artist pages, which enable audiences to participate with, rather than simply consume, the station's outputs.

And if Radio 3 is an ecosystem, Pratt is its overseeing organism. He's responsible for strategizing how best to synergize the station's distribution platforms, determining where to publish content (and what content should be published) and figuring out how Radio 3 can best raise awareness of new Canadian music.

"We feel like we're up to our elbows in helping to figure out what the media experience is going to be for the next generation, which is cool."
Steve Pratt

While Pratt says he's not a poster child for a long radio career leading up to a certain point, he thinks the variety of genres and mediums he's bounced around between — including stints in entertainment journalism, local news, children's and comedy programming and at MuchMusic — has been more valuable than a lengthy radio tenure.

"The important thing is understanding how to reach audiences and tell stories that are specific to the medium that you're using."

But as mediums are changing so significantly in this digital age, what's most important to Pratt is also what he finds most challenging.

"No one has figured out what the future is going to be when a large chunk of that audience migrates away from AM/FM or conventional television, or how many of them are going to migrate over, or how they're going to make money or survive in a digital universe," he says.

"We feel like we're up to our elbows in helping to figure out what the media experience is going to be for the next generation, which is cool."

For more of the Backstage Pass exclusive series check Workology frequently or stop by:
metronews.ca/work

Clarification

Last week an article headlined "One company's huge impact" incorrectly stated that Deloitte would be giving their entire staff a day off to volunteer for their so-called Impact Day as they had in years prior. Deloitte will not be giving a day off and instead will be encouraging employees to volunteer their own time, while off work on Sept. 26, to volunteer. Metro regrets the error.

A different reaction to blood, body parts

OddJobs

Diane Peters

Metronews.ca/oddjobs

As a new firefighter back in 1998, Brian Woronuik of Delta, B.C., had a very different reaction to scenes of blood, guts and gore than most people.

Instead of getting freaked out, he wondered who would clean up.

"I got me thinking, I wonder if there are any companies out there who would look after these families' needs in times of disaster?" thought Woronuik, who's now 38.

For two years he researched the business before getting a loan to launch Trauma Scene Clean Up. He got certified by the American Bio-Recovery Association, and called on his stepfather and several firefighter colleagues to work with him.

The company's first call was for an older man who'd been found dead in his home after more than a week. A funeral home had taken the body away, but the signs and smells of decomposition needed serious clean up.

The man's family stood aside while Woronuik and his crew did their thing. "They were so thankful of our services, we knew we were onto something."

For a typical call, the company tries to respond within a few hours. Depending on the scene, two technicians or more will show up and at least one will gear up in a disposable protective suit and put on gloves and a respirator.

Anything with blood on it gets placed in a biohazard tub — they're brought back to the office and disposed of safely later. Then the crew pulls out hospital grade cleaners and sets to disinfecting the site. "We make it as close to pre incident as possible," says Woronuik.

It's exhausting work, and the suits can get pretty hot.

Calls can take a few hours, or a few days. A murder or suicide can cause blood and bones to be thrown some distance, so technicians have to move furniture. If a body sits for a long time, blood can pool and drip through walls and floors, and things may even have to be torn up.

Since Woronuik is almost always on call — between the business and his firefighting shifts — he's having trouble finishing building a fence on his property. And he's missed two weddings. Luckily, his common-law partner is a police officer and she works crazy hours too.

Most of Woronuik's six employees balance clean up work with firefighting too. They're all used to seeing blood and body parts.

The Lowdown

Job title: Crime and trauma scene cleaner;
Salary: Charges $250 an hour and up;
Education/training: At least a class in blood-borne pathogens, but preferably certification from the American Bio-Recovery Association
Best Part of the Job: "At the end, knowing you've helped somebody out and prevented them from being retraumatized by having to do it themselves."
Worst Part of the Job: "The physical aspect of the clean up. And, if you know a bit of the situation, the grief that you feel for the family."

Diane Peters once hawked magic pens at the Canadian National Exhibition. She's now a writer and part-time journalism instructor.

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Burn the uniforms: Potter stars

Harry Potter stars Daniel Radcliffe and Emma Watson have urged the film franchise's bosses to burn their Hogwarts school uniforms when the series wraps — because they hated the outfits. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

Entertainment

Super Ryan

It looks like Ryan Reynolds has beat out Bradley Cooper and Justin Timberlake to play the lead role in the big-screen adaptation of Green Lantern, says Variety. EMPIREONLINE.COM

EDITOR: DEAN.LISK@METRONEWS.CA

Romantic spell

Plenty of heartache in new Potter film

HEIDI PATALANO
Metro World News

Watch out Edward Cullen, Harry Potter is growing up.

While doing press for the release of Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince, Daniel Radcliffe and teen co-stars Rupert Grint and Emma Watson don't bother to dodge the myriad of questions lobbed at them about their dating lives — even the ones about magic spells and love potions.

Watson says Radcliffe doesn't need them to snag a lady, just in case you were wondering.

Given that this sixth instalment of the Potter series spends a considerable amount of time on the burgeoning romantic relationships between the lead characters, the young actors, now all around 19 years old, found the romantic-comedy moments refreshing.

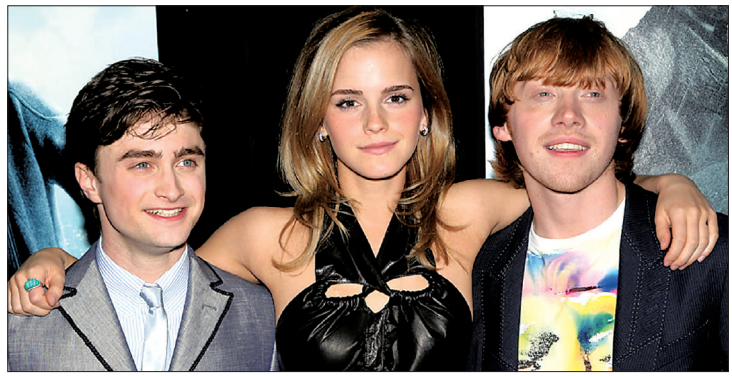
"If Hermione kept going in terms of the amount of worrying she was doing, she might've developed a hemorrhage, so it's nice that there's a bit of light relief for all of us," says Watson of her own character, who finds herself for the first time in the series, at the mercy of her own hormones.

Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince opens in theatres Wednesday

"This is Rupert's finest hour. He reveals himself to be a fantastic practitioner of comedy," adds Radcliffe about Grint, who in the film as Ron Weasley finds himself in his first relationship and trying out for the Quidditch team, with mixed results in both departments.

It becomes obvious throughout the interview that Radcliffe himself has a gift for inciting laughter — especially with his candid explanation of his own on-screen kiss.

"My God, my lips are like the lips of a horse," he says emphatically. "They were kind of distending away independently from the rest of my face and trying to encompass the lower half of hers, so I apologize."



From left, Daniel Radcliffe, Emma Watson and Rupert Grint do a lot of growing up as Harry Potter, Hermione Granger and Ron Weasley in Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince.

If Half-Blood Prince shows the young actors to be growing up, it only seems appropriate that David Yates, who picked up the role of director with the fifth instalment Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix, would continue with the series until its resolution with Deathly Hallows — set to be released in two parts in 2010 and 2011 respectively.

"I'm trying to grow the films up and try to make them feel a little more mature, a little bit more complex — and guiding these young actors to a mature phase of the films," says Yates.

Austrians don't mind Brüno

A shocking gay fashion reporter who dreams of being "the biggest Austrian superstar since Hitler" raised giggles when he hit Austrian cinemas Friday despite having rankled some who say his jokes go too far.

Brüno, a film from British comedian Sacha Baron Cohen, tells the story of a hapless television journalist from the Alpine city of Klagenfurt who takes his outrageous attitude and outfits to the United States in search of fame.

The film follows Cohen's surprise 2006 box office hit Borat, a fake documentary where he played a Kazakh journalist.

Cohen's new alter-ego has upset some for gags such as saying the "Austrian dream" is to "have a job, find a dungeon and raise a family there" in a nod to Josef Fritzl, the Austrian man who locked up and raped his daughter in a cellar over 24 years, fathering seven children with her.

"The film isn't really about Austria — sure there were cliches but it would have been funny with an Englishman or an American," said 33-year-old Sabine Doods, coming out of a Vienna cinema. "It might make Austria famous for a little while."

GETTY IMAGES

Sacha Baron Cohen attends the Australian premiere of Brüno as the film's titular gay Austrian fashionista in Sydney recently.

"The film isn't really about Austria — sure there were cliches but it would have been funny with an Englishman or an American."
Sabine Woods, a moviegoer in Vienna

Subtitled "Delicious Journeys Through America for the Purpose of Making Heterosexual Males Visibly Uncomfortable in the Presence of a Gay Foreigner in a Mesh T-Shirt," the film uses in-your-face comedy to expose homophobia.

Some gay advocates have said they are worried the film could reinforce negative stereotypes about homosexuals and a few Austrians have reacted unhappily. Austria's new envoy to Britain called for a boycott, criticizing the film's "cheap" jokes.

"I guess it might stop people confusing Austria with Australia and it might make people remember Hitler is Austrian not German, they always seem to get that one muddled up," said 35-year-old lawyer and moviegoer Arthur Machac, who described the film as "pretty average" but "inoffensive to Austria."

Reactions to the film have been mildly positive in the Austrian press, though some call it repetitive. REUTERS

Chart-topper
Lauren Conrad's debut novel, L.A. Candy, has topped the New York Times Best Seller list two weeks in a row. PEOPLE.COM

Flickinger to Paris: I'm just not that into you

Reality winner doesn't want to hang with Hilton — she wants to launch a perfume

MEL DARK
for Metro Canada

Brittany Flickinger, winner of Paris Hilton's My New BFF, is "over it."

Standing in a Betsey Johnson boutique, Flickinger has a confident air that says, "Let's get the effin' BFF questions out of the way, if you don't mind."

You get the impression the girl is more no-nonsense tough than pink fluff. With the help of bed head and a few squirts of hairspray, she's effortlessly achieved the rock star look. "My hair is gross and awesome. I love it." she says.

So, to get the BFF question out of the way. No — they are not still in contact. The "bestie" facade was short lived. They're not party sidekicks, they're not shopping partners, they don't swap boy stories over sushi or call each other up in a drunken stupor at 3 a.m. End of.

PHOTO: JOSH CORNELL, STYLIST: AMY LU/JUDY INC., CLOTHING: BETSEY JOHNSON

Brittany Flickinger, winner of Paris Hilton's My New BFF.

"It's going to take Paris a lot more BFF shows to find someone who'll tolerate her," says Flickinger.

Although the 24-year-old from Boston is currently based in LA, she's not yet acclimatized to the scene, preferring grittier cities like Chicago and New York.

Since the show ended, Flickinger has become a celebrity in her own right, travelling the globe for a series of appearances and endorsements — including appearances at the MTV Video Music Awards in Japan and Australia, the MMVAs in Toronto and the Calgary Stampede. Asked if she's overwhelmed by all the attention, she replies, "Meh, not really." After all, she was a high fashion model for five years and went on to front a band in Las Vegas, so flash-happy photographers are no biggie.

Her primary goal is her music (look out for details of an upcoming collaboration). A fashion line is also on her wish list; outfits that scream "dirty indie kid." But she'd also like to try acting. And a perfume would be great, of course.

So are there many contenders for Flickinger's BFF? Well, obviously. But she's only interested in "real" friends — the kind that take you off speaker phone once in a while.

There's trouble's brewing In the Kitchen

In the **Kitchen**

Author: Monica Ali
Publisher: Scribner
Price: $34.99 (Hardcover)

Life in the kitchen is no easy task for Gabriel Lightfoot, the chef at a restaurant in London's Imperial Hotel. He must appease demands of the hotel manager and handle a staff reflecting Piccadilly's multiculturalism, all while secretly negotiating with backers to open his own restaurant.

But the death of a night porter brews up trouble in the basement and upsets the balance in Gabriel's life. When he meets Lena, a mysterious Eastern European with a connection to the porter who says she was trafficked, his offer of shelter turns into an affair, dashing his relationship with his recently proposed-to girlfriend Charlie.

The Devil's **Paintbrush**

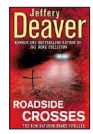
Author: Jake Arnott
Publisher: Sceptre
Price: $24.95 (Paperback)

The late 19th century military successes of Scottish-born Hector MacDonald netted him the nickname "Fighting Mac" in the British army. But soon he'd be known as Major-General Sir Hector MacDonald, a designation awarded during career-making battles in the Middle East and South Africa.

In fact-based-fiction novel The Devil's Paintbrush, Jake Arnott takes this real-life figure and recreates his final days, when his reputation was destroyed by allegations of homosexuality. With the occultist Aleister Crowley, MacDonald delves into the black-magic elements of Paris in 1903, leading to revelations about sexuality and imperialism.

Roadside **Crosses**

Author: Jeffrey Deaver
Publisher: Simon & Schuster
Price: $29.99 (Hardcover)



Roadside Crosses, the third novel in Jeffery Deaver's High-Tech Thriller Trilogy, revisits the California Bureau of Investigation's Kathryn Dance, the kinesics/body language authority previously introduced in The Blue Nowhere and The Broken Window. This time, Dance's focus is a string of crosses placed by someone to signal impending deaths — deaths in which victims are killed in ways that reflect information they've shared on online social networks. Dance is led to Travis Brigham, a teen scrutinized on a widely read blog for his recent involvement in a deadly car crash. When Brigham disappears, Dance must put lives at risk in order to save them.

— BRIAN COULTON/ FOR METRO CANADA

BookPicks

Box office

Following are the top 10 films at the North American box office for the three-day weekend beginning July 10:

1. **Brüno** $30.4 million US
2. **Ice Age: Dawn of the Dinosaurs** $28.5 million
3. **Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen** $24.2 million
4. **Public Enemies** $14.1 million
5. **The Proposal** $10.5 million
6. **The Hangover** $9.9 million
7. **I Love You, Beth Cooper** $5 million
8. **Up** $4.7 million
9. **My Sister's Keeper** $4.2 million
10. **The Taking of Pelham 123** $1.6 million

REUTERS

Kenya's**Style**

Kenya Hunt

Read the blog at metronews.ca/kenyasstyle

For complete online movie listings, trailers, reviews and tickets, visit: **metronews.ca/movies**

		Vu	SC	C		7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
primetime	7/13/09	265	353	2	TVO	Time Team		The Best of The Agenda		Secret Life of the Classroom		Chinese School		Best-Agenda
		211	331	3	GTV	ET Canada	Entertainment	House (HDTV PA)		Lie to Me (HDTV)		The Unit "Gone Missing"		News
		-	-	5	SRC	Des squelettes	La Petite vie	Chère Betty (HDTV) (SC)		Bons baisers de France (SC)		Le Téléjournal et Les Nou		TJ Ontario
		209	342	6	CHRO	The Road to Avonlea		Gossip Girl (HDTV)		Two/Half Men	Big Bang Th	Stargate Atlantis (DVS)		Comedy Now
		196	311	7	CTV	Hollywood	etalk	Law & Order		Law & Order: Criminal Intent		CSI: Miami (HDTV)		News (N)
		208	303	8	CBC	Coronation St.	Jeopardy! (N)	Triple Sensation (DVS)		Just for Laughs		CBC News: The National		The Hour
		-	360	9	NBC	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Great American Road Trip (N)		Law & Order: Criminal Intent		Dateline NBC		News (N)
		117	713	10	TVA	Les Gags	Sketch Show	Le Petit Monde	Km/h (SC)	Monk (HDTV) (SC)		TVA 22 heures	Juste pour rire en direct	
		-	-	11	QS	C't'une joke	C't'une joke	CSI: NY (SC)		Pratique privée (SC)		Donnez au suivant		Call TV
		137	763	12	TFO	Panorama été	Esprit	Sur la Piste de	Villages	*Zazie dans le métro* ★★ (1960, Comédie)			Folie-aventure	Esprit
		-	362	13	CBS	Dr. Phil (HDTV)		How I Met	Engagement	Two/Half Men	Big Bang Th	CSI: Miami (HDTV)		Two/Half Men
		216	395	14	OMN2	Raymond	According-Jim	News (N)		News (N)		Two/Half Men	King	Whose Sharia
		214	344	15	CITY	Law & Order: SVU		The Bachelorette (N)				Here Come the Newlyweds (N)		News (N)
		115	343	16	CFMT	Two/Half Men	The Simpsons	News (N)		Vivere Il	News (N)	The Simpsons	King of the Hill	Metropia
		218	345	18	E!	The Insider (N)	E! News	How I Met	Engagement	The Soup	Wildest TV	Final 24		News (N)
		-	361	20	ABC	News (N)	Entertainment	The Bachelorette (N)				Here Come the Newlyweds (N)		News (N)
		512	396	24	CPAC	Tête-à-tête	Beyond Poli	L'Heure politique		Comités du Sénat				Heure polit.
		651	355	25	CTS	Little House on the Prairie		Michael Coren Show		100 Huntley Street		Life Today	This Is Day	John Hagee
		-	365	36	FOX	TMZ (N)	Seinfeld	House (HDTV PA)		Lie to Me (HDTV)		News (N)		News
		-	-	64	PBS	Business Rpt.	Wings-Canada	Antiques Roadshow		History Detectives (N)		Make 'em Laugh: Funny		Charlie Rose
		205	312	104	CTV	Hollywood	etalk	Law & Order		Law & Order: Criminal Intent		CSI: Miami (HDTV)		News (N)
news		502	390	26	NW	CBC News	Our World	The Hour		CBC News: The National		Ten Trillion & Counting		National
		500	500	33	CNN	Lou Dobbs Tonight		Campbell Brown (N)		Larry King Live (N)		Anderson Cooper 360 (HDTV)		
sports		406	417	27	net	Week-Baseball	HR Derby Prv.	MLB Baseball 2009 State Farm Home Run Derby. From Busch Stadium in St. Louis.						Sportsnet Con.
		126	730	28	RDI	24 Heures en 60 minutes		Grands reportages (SC)		Le Téléjournal (SC)		RDI en direct	Le National	Le Téléjournal
		400	280	30	TSN	Billiards: WPBA		World Poker Tour				SportsCentre (HDTV) (Live)		
		410	403	52	SCR	RaceNight				(9:15) WWE Monday Night Raw				Score Tonight
family		411	457	56	OLN	Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Cycling (N)					Bounty Hunter	Cycling
		417	406	59	SC	Pimp My Ride	Pass Time	This Week in NASCAR (N)		SuperCars	SuperCars	Barrett-Jackson		Car Crazy (N)
		554	544	48	TEL	Jimmy Two	Total Drama	6TEEN	6TEEN	Futurama	Punch	Robot Chicken	American Dad	Moral Orel
		557	540	51	FAM	Wizards-Place	Han. Montana	The Suite Life	Latest Buzz	Wizards-Place	Life Derek	Ned's School	Cory in House	Zack & Cody
		551	542	65	YTV	Prank Patrol	Prank Patrol	Malcolm-Mid.	Futurama	League-Evil	Zixx Level	Falcon Beach		Mystery Hnt.
cable variety		570	580	29	MM	The Daily Fix		I'm a Celebrity, Get Me Out of Here!				Entourage	Gene Simmons	I'm a Celebrity
		615	520	31	A&E	CSI: Miami (HDTV)		Intervention "Trent"		Intervention Relapse. (N)		Obsessed (HDTV) (N)		The Cleaner
		628	584	32	SPKE	UFC Unleashed		UFC Unleashed		UFC Unleashed (HDTV)		4th and Long (HDTV) (N)		Jesse James
		521	560	34	TLC	Little Couple	Little Couple	Little Couple	Little Couple	Little Couple	Little Couple	Cake Boss (N)	Cake Boss	Little Couple
		145	761	35	TV5	L'Habit ne fait pas le moine			De Gaulle intime			Planète	Maritime	Journal TV5
		616	521	39	SHO	The Outer Limits		Cashing In	Kink in Hair	*Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde* (2008, Suspense) Dougray Scott.				House
		620	523	40	BVO	Chasing the Tango High		La Traviata "La Traviata" is performed at the Teatro alla Scala in Milan, Italy.					Opera Easy	Law & Order
		520	505	42	DIS	Daily Planet		MythBusters		Dirty Jobs		American Loggers (N)		Daily Planet
		575	583	43	CMT	Cheer Moms	Cheer Moms	Cheer Moms	Cheer Moms	Cheer Moms	Cheer Moms	Hope & Faith	Hope & Faith	Greatest
		601	562	45	SLC	Skin Deep	Til Debt-Part	Newlywed	Newlywed	Nearly Dead	Nearly Dead	In Laws	In Laws	ET Canada
		625	548	46	COM	Air Farce	Just for Laughs		Corner Gas	The Simpsons	South Park	Jamie Kennedy: Unwashed		Daily Show
		294	529	47	TBS	Family Guy	Family Guy	House-Payne	House-Payne	*Trading Places* ★★ (1983, Comedy) Dan Aykroyd, Eddie Murphy.				
		600	564	49	H&G	House Hunters	Property Virgin	For Rent	Income Prop.	Marriage	My First Place	House Hunters	House Hunters	Holmes-Homes
		627	528	50	SPC	Stargate Atlantis (DVS)		Star Trek: Voyager		*Earthquake: Nature Unleashed* (2004, Suspense)				Stargate SG-1
		581	566	53	MTV	Room Raiders	After	MTV News	Cribs	Living on Edge	Living on Edge	Living on Edge	Living on Edge	MTV Live
		618	524	54	TROP	Once a Thief		Carlawood (N)	Prod. Parker	Ground Up		Are You Smarter		Weekend
		522	506	55	HIS	NCIS "Escaped"		Tank Overhaul		Last Flight to Berlin		NCIS "Escaped"		Marine Mach.
		129	773	60	CD	Biographies "Daniel Pilon"		Paradis perdus (HDTV)		Images-chocs		Scènes de crime (HDTV)		Pris au piège
		261	394	61	V	Murder, She Wrote		Green Grass	Summer Wine	SOUL "My Way"		Secret Files of the Inquisition		Poltergeist
		602	567	62	W	Style by Jury	Friends	How Clean	Kim	Love It or List It		*A Very Merry Daughter of the Bride* (2008)		
		269	350	70	APTN	Notre Peuple (Part 1 of 2)		Tam	Pachamama	*Henri et Verlin* ★★★ (1994, Drame) Gary Farmer.				Tshinanu
		621	527	71	TLK	The Ellen DeGeneres Show		TMZ (N)	etalk	Canada's Next Top Model		Tonight Show-Conan O'Brien		TMZ
		603	561	95	FN	Chef at Home	Chuck-Day Off	Food Jammers	Glutton-Punish.	Food Detective	Get on Plate	At the Table	At the Table	Restaurant

critics'corner

Chinese School
Part of a week of programming on the theme "Growing Minds," this five-part series spends an academic year in the schools of one rural Chinese town. Watching these youngsters learn will teach viewers a few lessons, too. You'll learn about everyday life in China and the differences between Chinese schools and our own. 10 PM on 2 TVO

House
While treating Dana Miller, a former cancer researcher who gave up her career to pursue her own personal happiness, House and his staff begin to question their own life choices. Thirteen begins to show serious reactions to her experimental treatment in "The Greater Good." 8 PM on 3 GTV 36 FOX

Lie to Me
Lightman becomes obsessed with his investigation of two women who committed suicide. The team tries to recover billions of dollars for investors who were scammed by a Ponzi scheme. Kelli Williams also stars in "Depraved Heart." 9 PM on 3 GTV 36 FOX

The story that keeps getting sadder

Less than a month after Kate Gosselin filed for divorce, Jon Gosselin and 22-year-old Hailey Glassman (the daughter of the doctor who performed Kate's tummy tuck) were spotted holding hands, usmagazine.com reports. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Celebrity Buzz

Stewart laughs off rumours

WHAT FUN Twilight star Kristen Stewart has been getting a kick out of the rumours flying around about her and co-star Robert Pattinson — including the latest that she's pregnant with his child. Stewart is currently filming The Runaways, a biopic about Joan Jett's famous punk band. "Joan and Kristen managed to have a laugh about the rumour," a source tells Life & Style.

METRO WORLD NEWS

Jolie finds her old love: Flying

BACK IN THE COCKPIT Angelina Jolie resumed one of her favourite hobbies in L.A. last week: Flying lessons, usamagazine.com reports. The actress, 34, went to Burbank without Brad Pitt or her kids to meet up with a flight instructor.

METRO WORLD NEWS

Fish brought me to my knees

NOW POISON-FREE Jeremy Piven — who dropped out of a Broadway run because of "mercury poisoning" from eating too much sushi — tells Men's Fitness that he's finally found balance.

"I haven't touched a piece of fish in nine months," he tells the magazine. "If you don't balance your life, you're going to be brought to your knees — that's basically what happened to me."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Show Seacrest the money

WHAT RECESSION? Ryan Seacrest is reportedly finalizing a deal that would make him one of the highest-paid reality TV hosts, tvguide.com reports. Seacrest now pulls just shy of $5 million US a year but would receive a "major pay raise."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

La Toya suspects murder

CRIME ALLEGED One week after Los Angeles police confirmed that investigators had not ruled out homicide in the death of Michael Jackson, the late singer's older sister, La Toya Jackson, reveals that she suspects he was murdered, usmagazine.com reports the U.K.'s Mail On Sunday as saying.

"I believe Michael was murdered," she said. "I felt that from the start. Not just one person was involved, rather it was a conspiracy of people. He was surrounded by a bad circle. Michael was a very meek, quiet, loving person. People took advantage of that. People fought to be close to him, people who weren't always on his side."

She blamed this "shadowy entourage" for supplying him with prescription drugs.

"They got him hooked on drugs," she said. "He was pure and clean and then drugs came back into his system. I think it shocked his system so much it killed him."

Although results from toxicology tests will take a few more weeks to reveal a definitive cause of death, La Toya — who signed Jackson's death certificate — is certain the investigation will reveal her worst fears.

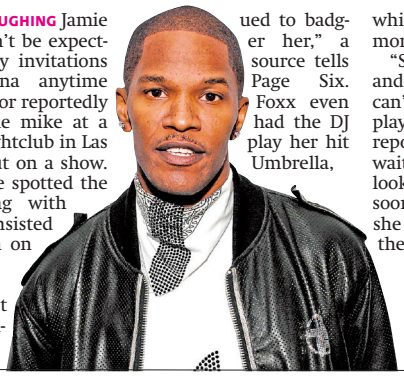
METRO NEWS SERVICE

Foxx annoys Rihanna at party

SHE WASN'T LAUGHING Jamie Foxx shouldn't be expecting any party invitations from Rihanna anytime soon. The actor reportedly took over the mike at a party at a nightclub in Las Vegas and put on a show. And when he spotted the singer dining with Jay-Z, he insisted she join him on stage.

"Rihanna declined, but Foxx continued to badger her," a source tells Page Six. Foxx even had the DJ play her hit Umbrella, which only annoyed her more.

"She got up to leave, and Jamie shouted, 'You can't go while your song is playing. Relax.'" Rihanna reportedly sat down and waited it out, but did not look happy about it. "As soon as the song was over, she got the hell out of there."



METRO WORLD NEWS

The mysterious Melrose Place

IT'S A SUPER SUPER SECRET Melrose Place star Ashlee Simpson-Wentz has no idea what sort of scandal will unfold on the upcoming TV series — because the show's producers refuse to let her read future scripts, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

TV bosses at the CW network are going to great lengths to ensure the remake of the 1990s soap opera is kept under wraps and have banned the cast from reading upcoming plotlines.

And the singer/actress is counting down the days until the show airs in the U.S. in September — so she can finally find out secrets about her character, Violet Foster, a small-town girl new to Los Angeles.

She tells MTV.com, "It's exciting because we don't get to see the next episode. We don't get to read the scripts until we're actually about to shoot it, and everyone is dying to know what's going to happen to their characters, so it's fun."

METRO WORLD NEWS

Aniston world's nicest boss

SHE CAN AFFORD IT Jennifer Aniston is apparently going for the title of "World's Nicest Boss."

The actress reportedly footed the bill for the entire crew of her new film, The Bounty to have an extra day off for their Fourth of July weekend. "How many people in this world would pay for an entire movie set to have off for the day? Not just anyone does that," a set source tells People magazine. "We're talking big bucks."

METRO WORLD NEWS

Rowe to appear in court for kids

COURT BATTLE Debbie Rowe, the ex-wife and biological mother to two of Michael Jackson's three children, has kept a low profile since the singer's death on June 25. But now that a hearing has been scheduled at Los Angeles Superior Court on July 20 for temporary guardianship of the children, Rowe plans to be seen, people.com reports.

"(Debbie) says that she will definitely be at the custody hearing," says Marc Schaffel, a former business partner of Jackson's and a close friend of Rowe's.

Rowe's children — Prince Michael, 12, and Paris, 11 — have been staying with their grandmother Katherine Jackson at her Encino, Calif., home since the singer's death. Blanket (Prince Michael II), 7, Jackson's youngest child, was born from an unidentified surrogate.

Katherine was named guardian in Jackson's will, and is petitioning the court to keep the children with her. Neither party is required to appear in court, an official says.

METRO WORLD NEWS

Brit to switch faiths for new boyfriend?

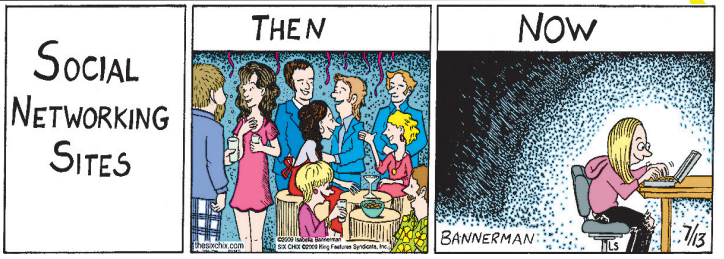
ALL FOR LOVE Britney Spears is reportedly so head-over-heels in love with her new boyfriend and agent, Jason Trawick, that she's considering changing her religion.

While hitting the road in Europe, Spears has been spotted wearing a Star of David necklace, and she's even recruited a rabbi to help her study the faith, sources tell the Sun.

"Britney wants to try the religion Jason was brought up with," a source says of the singer, who was raised a Baptist but also dabbled in Kabbalah a few years back at Madonna's suggestion.

METRO WORLD NEWS

ComicsOnline — For more cartoons, visit metronews.ca



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Tuesday Mainly sunny 22° / 12°
Wednesday Mainly sunny 23° / 16°

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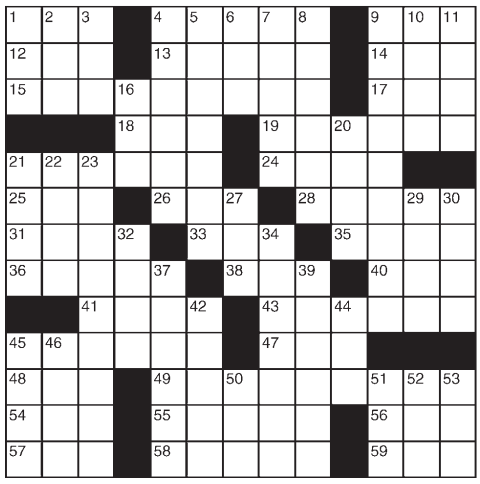
Take Five



Crossword across

1 Ocean motion
4 Fulton's power source
9 Winter ailment
12 Writer Buscaglia
13 Cognizant
14 Fleur-de- —
15 They get jacked up
17 Exist
18 Umpire's call
19 Heart lines?
21 Vacationers' site
24 Fit of peevishness
25 Biblical verb ending
26 Unfamiliar
28 Hits with the open hand
31 Ella's specialty
33 Shad product
35 Member of the brass (Abbr.)
36 Pitch
38 Tolkien creature
40 Greek vowel
41 Lima's country
43 Very funny joke (Sl.)
45 Scandinavian nation
47 Gorilla
48 Myrna of movies
49 Mountain road feature
54 Rd.
55 Mark above an ō
56 Doctor's charge
57 "Certainly"
58 Watched surreptitiously
59 — for (choose)

Crossword down

1 Sprite
2 — canto
3 Squeezing snake
4 Ringed planet
5 Chirp
6 Listener
7 Geometry answers
8 Quarks + antiquarks
9 Levies based on a single percentage
10 Old Italian money
11 Works with
16 Additionally
20 Anger
21 Take 10
22 Engrave
23 Having keen sight
27 Travail
29 Townshend of The Who
30 Cicatrix
32 Pigeon- —
34 Duel challenge
37 Takes with force
39 Drew from
42 Square
44 Prepared
45 Dispatch
46 Made on a loom
50 Foreman foe
51 E.T.'s craft
52 Agent, for short
53 Trawler gear

Sudoku

For more/less challenging Sudoku puzzles, visit metronews.ca

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone — one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

		1	8	5		4		9
5		4	7					2
	2							
7		9			4			
		6				3		
			1			7		8
							1	
8					1	5		3
2		3		7	9	8		

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:

M	A	T	■	A	H	A	■	T	R	E	A	T
A	B	A	■	B	E	T	■	R	A	T	I	O
C	A	R	■	C	A	R	B	U	N	C	L	E
A	S	S	■	S	P	I	R	E	■	■	■	■
W	H	I	Z	■	E	A	U	■	T	O	G	A
■	■	■	L	E	D	■	T	W	O	B	I	T
E	L	I	O	T	■	■	■	O	P	I	N	E
B	A	N	T	A	M	■	B	O	A	■	■	■
B	O	N	Y	■	E	D	O	■	Z	O	N	E
■	■	■	■	J	A	I	L	S	■	P	A	L
G	A	R	F	U	N	K	E	L	■	A	V	E
A	L	I	A	S	■	E	R	E	■	L	A	G
S	P	O	R	T	■	S	O	W	■	S	L	Y

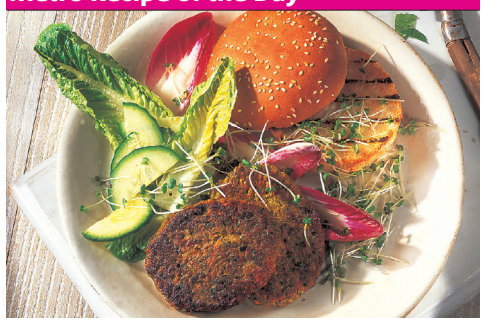
3	6	2	4	8	5	9	7	1
1	4	7	9	2	6	8	5	3
9	8	5	1	7	3	4	6	2
5	2	3	7	6	9	1	4	8
6	1	4	5	3	8	2	9	7
7	9	8	2	4	1	6	3	5
8	3	1	6	9	7	5	2	4
2	7	9	8	5	4	3	1	6
4	5	6	3	1	2	7	8	9

Find today's answers + play more games at metronews.ca

SUDOKU SOLVE TIME:

Under 13 min .....Genius
13-17 min.....Scholar
17-21 min .....Smart
21-25 min.....Not bad
25+ min.....Keep practising

Metro Recipe of the Day



Bean and Mushroom Burgers

INGREDIENTS:

1 can (19 oz /540 ml) red kidney beans
2 medium red onions
4 tbsp (60 ml) olive oil
2 tbsp (25 ml) red wine vinegar
2 tbsp (25 ml) light brown sugar
1/2 lb (250 g) cup mushrooms
1 clove garlic
1 tbsp (15 ml) garam masala
2 tbsp (25 ml) whole-wheat flour
Small bunch of fresh mint
Salt and black pepper
4 pita breads

METHOD:

1. Rinse beans well; spread on dish towel to drain.
2. For red onion relish, heat 1 tbsp (15 ml) olive oil in pot. Peel onions; slice one onion thinly and add to pot with vinegar and sugar. Bring to boil, stirring, then reduce heat and leave to simmer, uncovered, 15–20 minutes, or until onion is softened and slightly sticky, stirring from time to time. Remove pot from heat and keep warm.
3. Meanwhile, quarter remaining onion and put in food processor. Clean mushrooms, add to onion and process until finely chopped.
4. Heat another tablespoon of olive oil in frying pan, add onion and mushroom mixture, and cook over fairly high heat, stirring occasionally, for 5–8 minutes, or until golden and dry.
5. Peel garlic, crush into mushroom mixture, stir in garam masala and flour and cook 1 minute. Rinse, dry and chop enough mint to give 2 tbsp (25 ml). Remove pot from heat, add mint and season with salt and pepper.
6. Put beans onto deep plate and mash firmly with potato masher, then stir in cooled mushroom mixture.
7. Divide mixture into four; with lightly floured hands, shape portions into burgers.
8. Heat remaining oil in large frying pan, add burgers and cook over fairly high heat 6–8 minutes, turning once, until well browned. Warm pita breads.
9. Arrange burgers on warm plates and spoon onion relish over top. Serve with warm pitas and green salad.

SERVES 4

rd.ca

For nutritional information on this and other great recipes, go to **rd.ca** or check out **Key Ingredients in this month's Reader's Digest, on newsstands now!**

Horoscopes by Sally Brompton

sallybrompton.com

ARIES ♈
MARCH 21-APRIL 20
If your conscience tells you that what you are being asked to do by someone in a position of power is wrong you must say, "No."

TAURUS ♉
APRIL 21-MAY 21
Don't let anyone talk you into accepting less than you're entitled to today — either on the work front or in your private life — no matter their excuses.

GEMINI ♊
MAY 22-JUNE 21
You won't lack for energy or ambition now that go-getting Mars is transiting your sign, but watch out you don't push yourself too hard.

CANCER ♋
JUNE 22-JULY 22
The time has come to face up to a fear that has been tormenting you for as long as you can remember. The danger only exists in your mind.

LEO ♌
JULY 23-AUG 23
You will have zero tolerance today for anyone who tries to confuse or mislead you. You demand the truth of your friends and colleagues.

VIRGO ♍
AUG 24-SEPT 22
With Mars, planet of ambition, transiting the career area of your chart you can sense this is the time to make an impression at work. Make it a big one.

LIBRA ♎
SEPT 23-OCT 23
You'll need some time to yourself today to get your head around changes in your life. If you don't feel up to a meeting of some kind, reschedule it.

SCORPIO ♏
OCT 24-NOV 22
Today you'll test the theory that the best way to break an obsession is to indulge it so much you get sick of it. One thing's for sure: you'll have fun.

SAGITTARIUS ♐
NOV 23-DEC 21
A relationship has reached the point where you must either commit to it one hundred per cent or forget about it and move on to other things.

CAPRICORN ♑
DEC 22-JAN 20
Let other people take care of details today. Keep your eye on the bigger picture and ensure the project you're working on with others stays on course.

AQUARIUS ♒
JAN 21-FEB 18
Mars in your fellow Air sign of Gemini endows you with limitless self-belief. It also gives you the physical energy you will need to tackle a task.

PISCES ♓
FEB 19-MARCH 20
A highly personal situation needs to be dealt with and there may be tears before bedtime. Don't hold back if you've got something to say.

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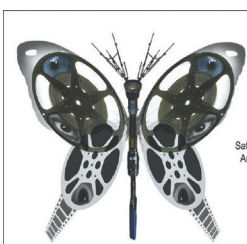
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